

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	23/01/2017
Unique reference number	1183136
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Nottinghamshire Ymca
Registered provider address	4 Shakespeare Street, Nvac, Nottingham NG1 3FG

Responsible individual	Brenda Serrant
Registered manager	Richard Slater
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	23/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

1183136

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The one young person who was placed at this home since the last inspection made good progress in all areas of his life in the short period of time he was resident here. Despite the placement being of a short duration and ending in October 2016, the young person was fully supported by staff and managers.
- Staff and managers acted as strong advocates for the young person, working closely with the placing authority and involved agencies. They challenged any deficits in service provision and formed trusting and positive relationships with the young person. They played a key part in identifying and supporting the move of this young person to a more suitable placement.
- From the point of admission to this home, the young person's incidents of going missing from care reduced significantly. This was attributable to high staffing levels, as well as detailed and robust plans and risk assessments being in place and followed by staff.
- Staff demonstrate a commendable understanding of the needs of young people placed at this home. Staff receive regular and good-quality supervision and informal support from managers. They also have access to a wide range of training and development opportunities, which further enhance their skills and competence.
- The manager is very experienced, qualified and skilled. He provides strong and positive leadership and management oversight to staff and young people.
- No shortfalls were identified following the last inspection of this home. One minor shortfall has been identified following this inspection. This relates to the need for placing authorities to ensure that independent return interviews are arranged for young people, following any missing from care incidents.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- ensure that, when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('The guide to the quality standards', paragraph 9.30, page 45)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local charity and provides care and accommodation for up to two young people, who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/03/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>At the time of this inspection, there are no children on the roll. At the previous inspection of this home in July 2016, there was one young person in placement. That placement ended in October 2016 and no further placements have been made since that time. It is the intention of the registered manager to consider and accept new referrals in the near future.</p> <p>Consideration was given during this inspection to the experiences and progress made of the young person who was resident here until October 2016. In the short period of time that this young person was resident in this home, he received positive care and support from the caring staff team.</p> <p>At the time of the placement commencing, no formal educational provision was in place. Staff and managers worked closely with the placing authority to identify a suitable local provision. The manager advocated strongly for the young person in relation to their educational needs, attending numerous meetings to discuss and agree how identified needs would be met. This resulted in a local mainstream educational provision being set up shortly before the young person moved to a new placement. Staff ensured that the young person was provided with educational activities and opportunities in the home when they were not in school.</p> <p>Staff and managers worked closely with the local child and adolescent mental health services in relation to the previously placed young person. This was in order to ensure that clear guidance and support was in place, to meet their complex emotional and behavioural needs. Staff ensured that the holistic healthcare needs of the young person were fully met. Records reflect that all routine health appointments were made and kept during the placement. Staff and managers fully considered the known historical information and used this to devise behaviour management and support plans. It is evident that, over a short period of time, staff responded to the complex emotional and psychological needs of the young person to a very good standard. They also requested that more in-depth assessments were completed, which were used to inform the next placement for the young person. This reflects the commitment of staff and managers to ensuring that the complex health needs of young people placed are known and understood.</p> <p>The young person enjoyed a wide and varied range of social activities during his placement. He worked with staff to devise activity planners for each week. Activities included swimming, trips to local parks and activity centres. As he was the only young person placed at this home at the time, staff also ensured that he had opportunities to socialise with young people from another children's home run by the company. This provided him with social interaction and ensured that he was</p>	

not socially isolated.

Staff provided a very caring and nurturing environment for the young person. They fully understood and supported contact arrangements with family members, reflecting their commitment to the young person's sense of identity. Staff understood the complex needs of the young person and constantly adapted their working practices to meet his needs safely and sensitively. Despite a more specialist placement being identified as being needed for this young person, staff never gave up and felt a strong commitment to meeting his needs during the short period of time he lived at this home. Staff and managers were commended by the placing authority and independent reviewing officer for the support and care they provided to this young person. They praised the staff team for looking after the young person so well. They commented that other providers might have served notice on the placement, rather than provide a stable placement that enabled the young person to move on so positively.

The manager attended numerous meetings with senior managers from the placing authority, in order to ensure that the move for the young person from this home was sensitively and carefully considered and planned. He demonstrates a commendable commitment to ensuring that placed young people receive the care and support they need and deserve. He challenged agencies when not satisfied that services reflected the needs of the placed young person.

At the time of this inspection, there are no children or young people placed in the home. The manager is currently reviewing the situation and wishes to ensure that any future placements are carefully considered and well matched. The previously placed young person was a solo placement, as the manager felt strongly that the levels of care and support they needed would not be possible if a second child were placed. This reflects the manager's ethos of ensuring high-quality care and support to young people placed in this home. He is also fully supported by senior management and the responsible individual in such decisions.

From records considered during this inspection, it is apparent that the young person was fully consulted about all aspects of the care and support he received. Despite him being the only child in placement, staff had regular meetings with him to consider his wishes, feelings and views. Where staff had to apply sanctions for concerning behaviours, these were fully discussed with the young person. Their views on the most appropriate sanction or consequence were always sought and considered and his views fully recorded. He also read and commented on his case records on a regular basis. This reflects a staff team which is committed to being open and transparent with young people and who value their input into the care they receive.

The move of this young person was very sensitively and positively handled by staff and managers. The young person was able to meet with staff from his new placement and visit, prior to moving. Staff and managers from this home arranged for a leaving party for him. He received gifts and has a life story book of photos of the time he spent living in this home. Such attention to detail reflects staff and

managers who clearly value young people and want them to have positive endings.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>During the short placement of the young person, there was one physical intervention used and a significant reduction in the number of missing from care episodes. There have been no complaints received from the young person or others involved in their care. Staff and managers ensured that detailed and comprehensive behaviour management and placement plans were devised and implemented. Through consultation with local mental health services, staff were able to anticipate concerning or potentially risky behaviours of the young person placed and respond in a sensitive and safe manner.</p> <p>Prior to this placement, the young person had significant periods of being missing from care. During his time at this home, such incidents reduced to just three occasions of going missing. Staffing ratios were increased to provide the support and supervision necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of the young person. Missing episodes were mostly brief and resulted in the safe return of the young person to the home. Close and proactive partnership working with the local police supported such positive responses and outcomes. The placing authority failed to ensure that an independent person was provided, on the three missing from care incidents, to speak with the young person. This would provide staff and managers with a better understanding of the reasons for the young person going missing and inform their risk assessments and care planning processes more fully.</p> <p>Staff receive training and development opportunities, which provide them with the skills and competences to provide good-quality care and support. They respond positively and with confidence to any incidents, maintaining detailed and accurate records. Regular meetings take place with local authorities and police to consider any known or potential risks posed to young people placed in this home. This reflects the commitment of managers in using local resources and agencies to promote the safety and welfare of young people living in this home.</p> <p>The home presents as being well maintained throughout, with regular checks being undertaken by staff and managers to ensure it remains safe and secure. Regular checks ensure that staff and young people know what to do in the event of a fire or emergency. The manager has good systems in place to ensure that regular health and safety checks are carried out. Any damage or faults identified by staff in the home receive prompt attention from the maintenance team, with detailed records being maintained of actions needed and taken.</p> <p>Risk assessments for the young person who was placed reflected their current and changing needs. The manager has good systems in place to ensure that staff</p>	

regularly review and update them following any significant incidents. Careful consideration is given to any activities outside of the home which may pose a risk to the young person, reflecting staff ratios required to support them and actions to be taken. An example of this relates to potential missing from care incidents. Staff had access to maps of where the young person may run off to, to assist them in making a quick search of known areas. This enabled staff to take prompt and proactive action, leading to a reduction in the amount of time the young person was missing for during their placement at this home.

Recruitment and selection procedures for this home are robust and prevent unsuitable adults from working with vulnerable young people. The manager has also introduced new systems for checking any agency staff who may be used at this home. Visits have been made to relevant social care agency offices, in order for the manager to consider checks undertaken on agency staff. Records maintained in the home reflect a commendable consideration of agency staff used, with detailed information on all checks, employment histories and references undertaken. The use of agency staff in this home is minimal, as the manager has a pool of relief staff who the company recruit and use. This provides for consistency of care for young people in the event that permanent members of staff are not in work for any reason.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager has a wealth of experience and skills in managing children's homes. He is also the registered manager for another of the company's children's homes locally, and provides strong and positive leadership to both services. He has a strong and very child-centred ethos, wanting the very best for those young people placed in his home. This is reflected in the fact that no new placements have been made since the last one ended, as the manager is intent on ensuring that placement matching is robust and can meet identified needs of young people placed.</p> <p>The manager has a clear vision for the future of this home and is now focused on ensuring that he and the staff team can provide positive placements and experiences for young people. He is currently considering the type of future placements he feels the staff team could best support. Senior managers have recently agreed to an increase in the staffing ratios for this home, with interviews currently being undertaken for additional staff. The manager feels very well supported and valued by senior managers and the responsible individual. He and other managers in the organisation have undertaken a detailed analysis of their current provision and staffing, leading to plans for the future of this and other homes. There is a strong learning ethos evident in this home, with staff being fully</p>	

included in discussions and decisions about placements and the future of the service.

The staff team feel very well supported by the manager and responsible individual in this home. Managers are keen to develop their skills and experiences. As there are currently no young people placed in this home, staff have been re-deployed to assist in other homes run by the organisation. Some have been successful in gaining temporary promotions and feel valued as a result of such opportunities. Induction processes for new staff are very comprehensive and robust. The manager has devised and implemented an induction programme for all new staff, which robustly challenges and explores their understanding of policies, procedures and practice.

The manager has good systems in place for monitoring and overseeing all aspects of the care and support provided to young people during their placements in this home. Since the last inspection, a new independent person has been appointed to undertake the monthly monitoring visits to this home. Reports from such visits are detailed and comprehensive. The visitor sets clear recommendations for any identified shortfalls. The manager is very positive about the new visitor and clearly responds promptly and positively to their reports and recommendations.

A key strength of this home relates to the excellent partnership working with other involved agencies. The manager attends a range of meetings with placing authorities and local police on a regular basis. He takes detailed notes from such meetings, and it is evident from records considered during this inspection that he is a strong advocate for young people's needs and rights. He is not afraid to challenge agencies and professionals, if he feels a young person's needs are not being met. Such an approach and attitude has led to improved outcomes for the young person who has recently left this home. The young person has been able to move to a new specialist placement, in a planned and sensitive manner.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm, or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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